

**NCVR Board Meeting
November 17-18, 2016
Chicago Illinois**

The National Board of the National Conference of Vicars for Religious held its Fall Meeting at the Felician Sisters Mother of Good Counsel Convent – Chicago, Illinois, November 17-18, 2016.

Members Present: Sisters Maryann Seton Lopicolo, SC, Louise Hembrecht, OSF, Mary McGarrity, IHM, Marilyn Kerber, SNDdeN, Marlene Weidenborner, OSF, Eymard Flood, OSC and Nancy Mathias, OSU.

Excused: Sister Mariette Moan, ASCJ

President – Sister Maryann Seton reported that since the Board meeting in May 2016, she had sent letters of Congratulations to Sr. Janice Bader, CPPS and Br. Paul Bednarczyk, CSC from NCVR on the occasion of their recent elections to Congregational leadership.

Letters were sent to each presenter for the Annual Assembly to confirm their participation and to prospective break-out session presenters. All are confirmed for March 2017. They are: Sr. Lynn Levo, CSJ, Br. Bill Short, OFM, Sr. Mary Ellen Burns, ASCJ. Break-out sessions Judith Stegman, Sr. Kelly Connors, PM, Sr. Debbie Borneman, SSCM.

A summary report for the Assembly was sent to Sr. Eymard in the Western region from our May Board meeting and a letter and announcements were sent to Sr. Mariette for the website

CICL-SAL requested input for the revision of the document, *Mutuae Relationes*, for committee work to begin in January 2017. Sister Maryann sent the letter with questions to each member on the mailing list and received 17 responses from which she composed our suggestions due in Rome by September 20.

One topic for the CRLM meeting in Baltimore was a report on any activities for the Year of Mercy that could impact how our Conference will live into the future. Sister Maryann received four responses and included them in the report for CRLM. She also prepared the report for the CCLV Meeting in Baltimore in November. Sr. Mariette represented us at these two meetings.

In July an invitation came from CICL-SAL to the Bishops for the first International Congress for Vicars/Delegates for Religious to be held in Rome October 28-30. Sister Maryann circulated this to each member for consideration. Five members were able to attend.

Sister Maryann followed up this opportunity by writing to Cardinal de Aviz and Archbishop Caballo, OFM in CICL-SAL to thank them for the opportunity and to ask them to include the NCVR on their mailing lists.

While in Rome Sister Maryann met with Fr. Hank Lemoncilli about the March Assembly. If he is selected to represent CICL-SAL again, he will join a panel presentation on the Congress with those of us who were able to attend.

Vice-President – vacant

Sister Mary Dolora needed to resign as Vicar for Washington DC and thus as Vice-President of NCVR because of a new assignment from her Congregation.

Secretary – Sister Louise Hembrecht sent out membership renewals and other information as requested by Sister Maryann. She received and processed renewal forms; updated email addresses and sent checks to Sister Mariette

The membership of the NCVR for 2016-2017 as of November 17, 2016 is:

Eastern Region – 24 members (36 Dioceses)

Midwestern Region – 15 members (61 Dioceses)

Southern Region – 20 members (44 Dioceses)

Western Region – 14 members (36 Dioceses)

Total Membership for 2016-2017 is 73 members.

A few additions were made to the Directory

- a) indicated which were Archdioceses
- b) gave the name of the bishop and the diocesan web address
- c) indicated members by a + before the name of the vicar/delegate/representative

Treasurer: Sister Mariette Moan, ASCJ

Sister Mariette was unable to attend the Board Meeting because of illness.

Regional Reports

Western Region – Eymard Flood, OSC

During this past year, the Year of Mercy, Sister Eymard reported that she was busy with many activities in the Diocese. These included: vocation days, prayer services, Eucharist Adoration, joined communities for Evening Pray, participated in the National Day of Prayer for Vocations, gathered a group for prayer at the Service for Christin Unity, formed a Vocation Discernment Program and started praying Evening Prayer with Eucharistic Adoration on the first Friday of the month.

Since June she attended jubilee celebrations, professions, funerals, coordinated a meeting of Major Superiors and Bishop Vann for Spring 2017, attended the Silver Jubilee for Father Robert Herbst, OFM Cap, former Vicar for Religious in the Diocese of Oakland, CA, did two mission appeals for my congregation, had an occasional lunch with local vicars and attended the farewell luncheon for Sister Cecilia Canales, OP.

Sister Eymard made contact with all the dioceses in the Western Region, planned the Region Assembly for October 11-13 in Mission San Jose, Fremont, CA. The speaker was Sister Marietta Fahey, SHF. Her theme was *Charisms Now and Into the Future*. Sister invited us to share our hopes/expectations as we gathered. Her presentation was in three phases: Transformation happens, Transformation expressed in charisms and the Journey of one congregation (her own). When we talk about change and transformation we need to be cognizant that these two can take place both internally and externally. Charism is the fire within that sustains congregation.

Quoting from Ilia Delio: *“To live a radical commitment to the Spirit is to live in the anxiety of the now; the moment of in-breaking future; to live poised for the next moment of divine surprise.”* Sister

said we are on the edge of surprise! Following Sister Marietta's presentations the members reflected for a while on Lynn Levo's article, "*Becoming a Transforming Presence: Insights from the Dark Night*"

The remainder of the meeting was devoted to the logistics of the 2017 Assembly in Chicago.

Midwestern Region - Sister Marilyn Kerber, SNDdeN

Sister Marilyn had knee replacement surgery in August and basically lost a month of work. She is planning on having a Go-To-Meeting with the Vicars of the Region after the first of the year. Sister Joyce Candidi, OSHJ has suggested that one thing our members might do together is a webinar. This will be on the agenda along with the upcoming Assembly and a report on the November Board meeting.

Southern Region – Sister Marlene Weidenborner, OSF

Sister Marlene reported that she had communicated with members of the Southern Region regarding cluster meetings in the Southern Region. The 2018 Annual meeting is the responsibility of the Southern Region. Some initial planning has begun but a theme has not yet been chosen. The Diocese of ??, Florida is waiting for a new Bishop to be appointed. Currently Bishop Lynch is the hospital in Alaska and will not be able to attend the formal closing of the door of the Year of Mercy.

Eastern Region – Sister Mary McGarrity, IHM

The Eastern Region of the NCVR met at Wappingers Falls, NY from October 17-19th. Sixteen members were in attendance. Sister Mary J. McGarrity, IHM, the chairperson began the meeting with a prayer followed with the introductions of the new members: Sisters Gilmary Kay, RSM, Washington, DC and Paulina Hurtado, OP from Fall River, MA. We also noted the loss of Sister Dolara, RSM and Brother James McVeigh, OFM. Sister Mary then shared briefly on her trip to Rome and the meeting with the members of CICLSAL. The highlight of the trip was the beautiful encounter with Pope Francis during which Sisters Eymard, Joyce and Mary had brief conversations with the Holy Father.

After reviewing the planned agenda, Sister Catherine Cleary led the group in the process of Contemplative Listening. Later, based on the topics that surfaced, the members engaged in conversations and later shared their views and concerns on the topics.

The following morning, Sister Nancy Strillacci, ACSJ shared her journey with a community that ultimately went out of existence. Through a carefully documented Powerpoint presentation "Assisting An Order In Decline," Sister demonstrated the process which began in 2010 and ended with the suppression of the Institute in 2014. The group commended Sister for the compassion with which she accompanied the women involved.

Sister Janet Mock, CSJ, the main speak for our conference, shared her insights with us during her two conferences titled "Reality, Grief, Hope: Three Urgent Prophetic Tasks" and "Standing in the Tragic Gap." Afterward, Sister entertained questions and the discussion continued. Sister Nancy Strillacci, ACSJ was elected vice chair to replace Brother James. Following the Liturgy celebrated by Father James Donlon, the blessing was said over Sister Nancy as she was formally installed.

During the business meeting, Sister Catherine Cleary, the treasurer updated the members concerning the present state of our finances. Sister Mary encouraged those who are under budget restrictions to

consider asking for scholarships for the National Conference. The meeting adjourned the next morning after the Mass and people rushed to get home as the snow fell.

Congress in Rome

Sister Maryann summarized the international meeting of Vicars of Religious in Rome in October. She said the meeting consisted of in-put (presentations), a question and answer period and some time for discussion. The focus of the meeting was the promotion and protection of consecrated life. It was pointed out that the bishop's role is to safeguard the charism, not necessarily the apostolate.

The meeting included topics such as: inculturation of the charism, new models of religious life in conversation with the culture, and accompaniment of new congregations, revision of *Mutuae Relationes* and the Apostolic Constitution on women's monasteries.

The question arose as to whether the presentations were available in writing. The talks will be sent to the website when they are available in English.

Appointment of a Vice-President

Sister Maryann read the section of the By-Laws regarding the process of succession upon the resignation of a member of the Board. The By-Laws in the Constitutions state that the Executive Board can appoint someone to fill the empty position. It should be noted that the Executive Board, consisting of Sister Maryann Seton Lopicolo, SC, President; Louise Hembrecht, OSF, Secretary, and Nancy Mathias, OSU, Past President met on Friday to discuss this issues. There was email communication with Sister Mariette Moan, ASCJ, treasurer.

The members of the Board were clear of the need to have a vice-president. It was suggested that Sister Nancy Mathias, OSU, past president, fill the position of vice-president until the elections at the Annual Meeting in 2018. Sister Nancy agreed to take the position of Vice President until the 2018 Annual Meeting when the next elections would take place.

The 2017 Annual Meeting

Theme: Remembering the Journey, Opening Doors of Hope

Sister Eymard shared plans for the 2017 Annual Meeting.

A "to-do list" was made.